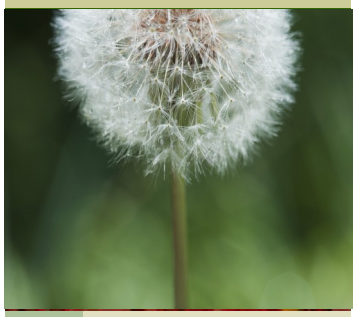
Volume 9, Issue 1

May 2012



KICKAPOO ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE

The Green Clan

# May is Asthma Awareness Month

## Article by Mike Kelley, Air Quality Coordinator

With the average American spending upwards to 90% of their time indoors, allergens and other irritants can become a significant factor in triggering an asthma attack. For a person's asthma there may be just a single trigger, or you may find several things that will act as triggers. Some of the most common asthma triggers can be easily identified and mitigated.

One of the most common triggers for asthma is secondhand smoke. This smoke contains more than 4,000 substances, including several compounds that cause cancer. Secondhand smoke can trigger asthma attacks and/or increase the severity of an attack. It can also be a risk factor in new cases of asthma in preschool-aged children. A child's developing body can make them more susceptible to the effects of secondhand smoke and, due to their small size, they breathe more rapidly than adults, thereby taking in more secondhand smoke. Children receiving high doses of secondhand smoke, such as those with smoking parents, run the greatest relative risk of experiencing damaging health effects. This trigger can be mitigated in the following ways: don't let anyone smoke near your child, and If you smoke, don't do it in your home or car.

Another asthma trigger that may go unnoticed would be chemical irritants. Products such as: cleaners, paints, adhesives, pesticides, cosmetics, or air fresheners. Chemical irritants are also present in schools and can be found in commonly used cleaning supplies. These irritants may exacerbate asthma. At larger concentrations in the air, many products can actually trigger a reaction. If you find that your asthma or your child's asthma gets worse when you use a certain product, consider trying different products. If you must use a product, then you should: make sure your child is not around, open windows or doors, or use an exhaust fan. Always remember to follow the instructions on the product label.

If you think something may be making your asthma worse, work with a doctor to identify triggers and develop a treatment plan that includes ways to reduce exposures to your asthma triggers.

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**http://ktik-nsn.gov**

## *E-Waste Roundup 2012*

*The Kickapoo Environmental Office will be hosting an electronic waste collection event during the week of May 7th through May 11th, 2012. This is only for e-waste material and not household trash items. Acceptable items include, televisions, DVD players & VCR's, computers, printers & parts, radios, stereos & speakers, phones (regular & cellular), calculators, copiers and fax machines. Bring your e-waste to the back of the Kickapoo Environmental Office or call us if you need any assistance getting the items here. The E-Waste will be hauled away @ noon on Friday. Contact Rachel Hudson at 486-2601 Ext. 8 if you have any questions or need more information.*

## Asthma—The Water and Salt Connection

By Dr. F Batmanghelidj MD

Asthma and allergy—conditions mainly treated with different kinds of antihistamine medications are important indicators of dehydration in the body. Histamine is a most important neurotransmitter that primarily regulates the thirst mechanism for increased water intake. It also establishes a system for rationing the available water in the body during dehydration. In dehydration, histamine production and its activity increase greatly. Increased histamine release in the lungs causes the spasm of the bronchioles. This natural spasmodic action of histamine on the bronchial tubes is part of the design of the body to conserve water that would normally evaporate during breathing. The winter steam or fog that you see when you breathe out in cold weather is water that is leaving your lungs as you breathe.

In some, bronchial constriction asthma is the first reaction to dehydration. Children are more susceptible to asthma than adults. Their bodies are growing all the time and every cell in an expanding body needs 75 percent of its volume in water. At the same time, children's bronchial trees are smaller and less rigid, and can be constricted more efficiently than fully developed bronchial trees with firm cartilage support in their struc-ture. Children's bodies also have less of a water reserve to tap into for redistribution. These are the reasons children exhibit shortness of breath—asthma—more readily than adults when they become dehydrated.

You can naturally prevent asthma and allergy by drinking more water. When you understand the physiology of the human body and the role of histamine in its water regulation and drought management, you realize that chronic dehydration in a vast majority of people is the primary cause of allergies and asthma. Increased water intake on a regular basis should be adopted as a preventive measure as well as the treatment of choice. In those who have had attacks of asthma or allergic reactions to different pollens foods, more strict attention to daily water intake should become a pre-emptive measure with your doctor's consultation.